

REMARKS

Claims 6-9, 11, 12 and 24-46 were pending and under consideration in the above-identified application, Claims 1-26, 28, 33-37, 42, and 44 - 45 were previously cancelled.

In the Office Action, Claims 27, 29- 32, 38 - 41, 43 and 46 were rejected.

In this Amendment, Claims 27 and 41 are amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this Amendment.

Accordingly, Claims 27, 29- 32, 38 – 41, 43 and 46 remain at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 27, 40 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Takaaki* (JP Patent Publ. No. 2002-131750) in view of *Kikkawa* (U.S. Patent No. 6,665,032).

Claims 38, 39, and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Takaaki* and *Kikkawa* in view of *Hanrahan et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,262,788).

Claims 29 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Takaaki* and *Kikkawa* in view of *Suzuki et al.* (U.S. Patent Publ. No. 2002/0018162).

Claims 30, 32, and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Takaaki* and *Kikkawa* in view of *Suzuki et al.* and in view of *Nishida et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,052,168).

Although Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, Claims 27 and 41 have been amended to clarify the invention and remove any ambiguities that may have been at the basis of these claim rejections

Independent Claim 27 is directed to a liquid crystal display device. The liquid crystal display device includes a microlens, a liquid crystal panel, a first optical compensation layer, and a second optical compensation layer.

In relevant part Claim 27 recites that:

“... a liquid crystal panel, the liquid crystal panel having a first rubbing direction on a luminous flux emission side and a different second rubbing direction on a luminous flux incidence side; and

...

the inorganic material of each of the first and second optical compensation layers is cut out so that the direction of inclination of the optical axis of each of the first and second optical compensation layers is substantially equal to the first rubbing direction or to the second rubbing direction of the liquid crystal panel.”

Independent Claim 41 has also been amended to recite this above quoted limitation. This limitation is supported in paragraph [0053] and FIG. 5 of the instant application published as US Publication 2004/0239851 on December 2, 2004.

The Office Action acknowledges that *Takaaki* does not disclose that the inorganic material is cut out so that the direction of inclination of the optical axis is substantially equal to the rubbing direction of the liquid crystal panel, and that the liquid crystal panel is in between the first and second optical compensation layers. The Office Action further asserts that *Kikkawa* discloses a liquid crystal layer 23 in between the first and second compensation layers 24, 25, 210, and 202, having a direction of inclination of the optical axis equal to the rubbing direction 101 and 102 of the liquid crystal panel so that the abnormal optical axis of the LC layer resides in the same direction as the abnormal optical axis of the birefringence of the phase compensating plates therefore to improve contrast.

In fact, *Kikkawa* states, in column 8, line 59 to column 9, line 7, that (emphasis added):

“Referring to FIG. 15, there is shown relationship between the directions of the LC orientation, the longer axis of the birefringence of the wavelength-dependent compensating plate and the polarizing axis of the polarizing plates. *The orientation 101 of the LC molecules in the vicinity of the first substrate 21, the orientation 102 of the LC molecules in the vicinity of the second substrate 22, and the inclined directions 201 and 202 of the birefringence of the phase compensating plates 24 and 25 are aligned with one another.* The polarizing axis 301 of the polarizing plate 11 resides at 45 degrees away from the direction of the LC orientation 101 or 102, and the polarizing axis 302 of the polarizing plate 22 is normal to the polarizing plate 12. The longer axis 400 of the wavelength-dependent compensating plate is aligned with the axial directions 201 and 202 of the phase compensating plates.”

In *Kikkawa*, the orientation 101 of the LC molecules in the vicinity of the first substrate 21, the orientation 102 of the LC molecules in the vicinity of the second substrate 22, and the inclined directions 201 and 202 of the birefringence of the phase compensating plates 24 and 25 are aligned with one another. Thus, *Kikkawa* fails to teach the claimed invention which requires a liquid crystal panel having a first rubbing direction on a luminous flux emission side and a different second rubbing direction on a luminous flux incidence side, and the inorganic material

of each of the first and second optical compensation layers being cut out so that the direction of inclination of the optical axis of each of the first and second optical compensation layers is substantially equal to the first rubbing direction or to the second rubbing direction of the liquid crystal panel.

For at least the above reason and because all of the rejections rely on the *Kikkawa* reference, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 27 and 41, and their respective dependent claims, are not rendered obvious by *Kikkawa*, taken alone or in combination with any other cited art.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejection be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that Claims 27, 29- 32, 38 – 41 and 46 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully request early and favorable notification to that effect.

If the Examiner finds that there are any outstanding issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Kader Gacem/
Kader Gacem
Patent Agent, Registration No. 52,474
SONNENSCHN NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP
P.O. Box 061080
233 S. Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1080
(312) 876-8000